

Veterinarian Shortage Situation Nomination Form

To be submitted under the authority of the chief State or Insular Area Animal Health Official

Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program (VMLRP)

This form must be used for Nomination of Veterinarian Shortage Situations to the Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program (VMLRP), Authorized Under the National Veterinary Medical Service Act (NVMSA)

Note: Please submit one separate nomination form for each shortage situation. See the State Animal Health Official (SAHO) section of the VMLRP web site (www.nifa.usda.gov/vmlrp) for the number of nominations permitted for your state or insular area.

Location of Veterinary Shortage Area for this Nomination

Location of Veterinary Shortage: Butler and Polk counties in Nebraska
(e.g., County, State/Insular Area; must be a logistically feasible veterinary practice service area)

Approximate Center of Shortage Area (or Location of Position if Type III): David City 68632
(e.g., Address or Cross Street, Town/City, and Zip Code)

Overall Priority of Shortage: High Priority

Type of Veterinary Practice Area/Discipline/Specialty (select one) :

Type II: Private Practice - Rural Area, Food Animal Medicine (awardee obligation: at least 30% FTE or 12hr/week)

For Type I or II Private Practice:

Must cover(check at least one)

- Beef Cattle
- Dairy Cattle
- Swine
- Poultry
- Small Ruminant
- Other: _____

May cover

- Beef Cattle
- Dairy Cattle
- Swine
- Poultry
- Small Ruminant
- Other: Equine

For Type III Public Practice:

Employer: _____ Position Title: _____

Please select **one or more** specialty/disciplinary areas:

- Food Safety
- Public Health
- Epidemiology
- Other: _____

(Optional) If the nominator wishes to specify a service time for this shortage situation that is higher than the minimum required for the shortage type checked above, please specify the percent time in the box below (based on a 40-hour work week). Leave the box blank if the service time for this shortage situation is for the minimum percent time of the shortage type indicated.

70 %

Please describe the **importance and objectives** of a veterinarian filling this shortage situation as well as being located in the community, area, state/insular area, or position requested above (limit your response to 1500 characters).

The objectives of the veterinarian filling the shortage situation are to assist in maintaining and improving overall animal welfare; maintaining the health of animals that contribute to an abundant, wholesome food supply; and maintaining and improving the veterinarian to food animal ratio. Further objectives include fulfilling the obligations of regulatory medicine for state and federal governments. The state hopes to mitigate vulnerability to emerging animal diseases by maintaining an appropriate veterinarian to food animal ratio.

An Internet search shows that there are only two veterinary clinics, one in each county, in this area that covers 1,032 square miles. Each clinic has one veterinarian who practices food animal health care. The other veterinarians licensed in that area listed by state of Nebraska public license records are either no longer practicing, practice only small animal health care or practice in other counties. According to the 2012 Census of Agriculture, the two counties combined have 102,835 cattle, 92,459 swine, 2,024 sheep and lambs and 370 horses (most of these horses are working animals at feed lots or ranches). A senior veterinarian in the area says he and his colleague in the area are being stretched too thin to appropriately cover the area and provide adequate health care for the large amount of food animals in the two-county region.

Please describe the **activities** of a veterinarian meeting this shortage situation in the community, area, state/insular area, or position requested above (limit your response to 1500 characters or less).

A new veterinarian to this area can expect to spend a large portion of his or her time working with cattle at feedlots as well as at cow-calf operations. Activities will include, but are not limited to, illness, injuries, artificial insemination, pregnancy checks and calving.

In addition, there will be limited work with poultry, swine, sheep and horses. Many of the horses in the area are working animals at feedlots and ranches and maintaining their health is a crucial component of cattle operations.

There is also companion animal work available if there are any slow times working with food animals occurs.

The veterinarian also would be expected to become proficient in regulatory medicine in order to assist state and federal officials in protecting against domestic and foreign contagious animal diseases.

Please describe any past efforts to recruit and retain a veterinarian in the shortage situation identified above (limit your response to 750 characters or less).

A senior veterinarian in the area says he has had some success in recruiting new veterinarians to the area but the challenge has been retaining them. He said they are close enough to some larger population centers and that some of the new recruits decide to seek higher paying jobs at small animal veterinary clinics. He added that large student loan debt has also made it difficult for beginning veterinarians to have the opportunity to buy into a practice, but the VMLRP would provide extra incentive for veterinarians to remain practicing food animal medicine in a shortage area.

Please describe the risk of this veterinarian position not being secured or retained. Include the risk(s) to the production of a safe and wholesome food supply and to animal, human, and environmental health not only in the community but in the region, state/insular area, nation, and/or international community (limit your response to 2000 characters or less).

The 2015 Census indicates that the population of Butler and Polk counties combined is approximately 10,000. The large majority of the residents in that area have their livelihoods directly or indirectly tied to the agriculture industry. A substantial portion of agriculture in those counties is directly tied to food animals. With only two, full-time veterinarians covering the 1,032 square miles of the two counties, it has been difficult at times to respond in a timely fashion to emergency situations. Not having adequate food animal health care available at the ready, could put individual animals or herds at risk. Any significant loss of food animals to livestock operations would have a reverberating effect on the local and regional economies. If there are not enough veterinarians to assist in vigilance against contagious disease outbreaks, the negative effects could be far reaching.

SAHO nominator must check both boxes below in order for NIFA to consider this nomination for official designation

- By checking this box, I affirm that this form represents a nomination and is subject to NIFA review and approval.
- By checking this box, I affirm that it is my professional opinion that this is a bona fide food supply or public health-related veterinary shortage situation. I affirm due diligence has been invested to identify this area as a shortage situation of at least moderate priority (severity).

Authorized State or Insular Area Animal Health Official or designee:

Name: Dr. Dennis Hughes

Title: State Veterinarian

Organization: Nebraska Dept. of Agriculture

Email: dennis.hughes@nebraska.gov

Telephone Number: (402) 471-2351 or 800-572-2437
(Area code required)

Public reporting for OMB control number 0524-0050 is estimated to average two hours, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information, unless it displays a current valid OMB control number. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden to NIFA, OGF, 800 9th St. SW, Washington, DC 20024, Attention Policy Section. Do not return the completed form to this address.